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APR 16 2012

Karl Morell  
Of Counsel

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232195

April 16, 2012

BY HAND DELIVERY

Cynthia Brown  
Chief, Section of Administration  
Surface Transportation Board  
Office of Proceedings  
395 E Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20423

Re: STB Docket No. AB 6 (Sub-No. 481X), BNSF Railway  
Company -- Abandonment Exemption -- In Walsh and  
Pembina Counties, North Dakota

Dear Ms. Brown:

Attached for filing are the original and ten copies of a Notice of  
Exemption under 49 C.F.R. § 1152.50. Also attached is a check  
covering the \$3,600 filing fee.

If you have any questions, please call me.

Sincerely,

*Karl Morell*

Karl Morell  
Of Counsel

Enclosures

ENTERED  
Office of Proceedings

APR 16 2012

Part of  
Public Record

**FILED**

APR 16 2012

**SURFACE  
TRANSPORTATION BOARD**

**FEE RECEIVED**

APR 16 2012

**SURFACE  
TRANSPORTATION BOARD**

**BEFORE THE  
SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD**

APR 16 2012

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<b>BNSF RAILWAY COMPANY</b>	)	
<b>ABANDONMENT EXEMPTION</b>	)	<b>DOCKET NO. AB 6</b>
<b>IN WALSH AND PEMBINA COUNTIES,</b>	)	<b>(SUB-NO. 481X)</b>
<b>NORTH DAKOTA</b>	)	

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**NOTICE OF EXEMPTION**

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**BNSF RAILWAY COMPANY**  
2650 Lou Menk Drive  
P.O. Box 96157  
Fort Worth, TX 76161-0057

**Courtney B. Estes**  
General Attorney  
BNSF Railway Company  
2500 Lou Menk Drive, AOB-3  
Fort Worth, Texas 76131-2828  
(817) 352-2351

**Karl Morell**  
Of Counsel  
BALL JANIK LLP  
Suite 225  
655 Fifteenth Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20005  
(202) 638-3307

Dated: April 16, 2012

**BEFORE THE  
SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD**

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<b>BNSF RAILWAY COMPANY</b>	)	
<b>ABANDONMENT EXEMPTION</b>	)	<b>DOCKET NO. AB 6</b>
<b>IN WALSH AND PEMBINA COUNTIES,</b>	)	<b>(SUB-NO. 481X)</b>
<b>NORTH DAKOTA</b>	)	

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**NOTICE OF EXEMPTION**

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BNSF Railway Company ("**BNSF**") files this Verified Notice of Exemption pursuant to the class exemption at 49 C.F.R. § 1152.50 to abandon 18.12 miles of rail line located between Milepost 42.08 at Grafton and Milepost 60.20 at Glasston in Walsh and Pembina Counties. North Dakota (the "**Line**"). The Line contains the stations of Auburn. St. Thomas and Glasston.

**1.     *Proposed consummation date.***

The proposed consummation date is June 5, 2012.

**2.     *Certification required by 49 C.F.R. § 1152.50(b).***

The required certification is attached hereto as **Exhibit A**.

**3.     *Information required by 49 C.F.R. § 1152.22(a)(1) through (4), (7) and (8) and (e)(4).***

**(a)    *General.***

**(1)    *Exact name of applicant.***

BNSF Railway Company

- (2) ***Whether applicant is a common carrier by railroad subject to 49 U.S.C. Subtitle IV, Chapter 105.***

BNSF is a common carrier by railroad subject to 49 U.S.C. Subtitle IV, Chapter 105.

- (3) ***Relief sought.***

BNSF seeks to use the class exemption at 49 C.F.R. § 1152.50 to abandon 18.12 miles of rail line located between Milepost 42.08 at Grafton and Milepost 60.20 at Glasston, in Walsh and Pembina Counties, North Dakota. There has been no local or overhead freight rail traffic on the Line since 2009. BNSF intends to exercise the abandonment authority and convert the portion of the Line between Milepost 42.08 and Milepost 52.50 to industry track. The remainder of the Line between Milepost 52.50 and Milepost 60.20 will be abandoned.

- (4) ***Map.***

A map of the Line is attached as **Exhibit B**.

- (7) ***Name, title and address of representative of applicant to whom correspondence should be sent.***

Karl Morell  
Of Counsel  
BALL JANIK LLP  
Suite 225  
655 Fifteenth Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20005

- (8) ***List of all United States Postal Service ZIP codes that the line proposed for abandonment traverses.***

The Line traverses U.S. ZIP codes: 58236, 58237 and 58276.

- (e) ***Rural and community impact.***
- (4) ***Statement of whether the properties proposed to be abandoned are appropriate for use for other public purposes, including roads and highways, other forms of mass transportation, conservation, energy production or transmission, or recreation. If the applicant is aware of any restriction on the title to the property, including any reversionary interest, which would affect the transfer of title or the use of property for other than rail purposes, this shall be disclosed.***

The Line traverses predominantly rural areas with more than adequate road and highway networks; therefore, there is little or no likelihood that the rail corridor is needed for transit purposes.

The right-of-way between Mileposts 52.50 and 60.20, however, is suitable for recreational trails. Some of the property underlying the right-of-way is reversionary, which would affect the transfer of the property for other than rail or rail-banking purposes.

**4. *The level of labor protection.***

The interests of railroad employees who may be adversely affected by the proposed abandonment will be adequately protected by the labor protective conditions in *Oregon Short Line R. Co. – Abandonment – Goshen*, 360 I.C.C. 91 (1979).

**5. *Certification.***

Certificates of compliance with the notice requirements of 49 C.F.R. §§ 1152.50(d)(1) and 1105.12 are attached as **Exhibit C**.

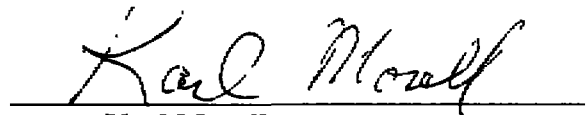
**6. *Environmental Report.***

The Environmental Report containing information required by 49 C.F. R. § 1105.7(e) is attached hereto as **Exhibit D**. Based on information in our possession, the Line does contain federally granted rights-of-way. Any documentation in BNSF's possession will be made available promptly to those requesting it.

**7. *Historic Report.***

The Historic Report containing information required by 49 C.F.R. § 1105.8 is attached hereto as **Exhibit D**.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Karl Morell", is written over a horizontal line.

**Courtney B. Estes**  
General Attorney  
BNSF Railway Company  
2500 Lou Menk Drive, AOB-3  
Fort Worth, Texas 76131-2828  
(817) 352-2351

**Karl Morell**  
Of Counsel  
BALL JANIK LLP  
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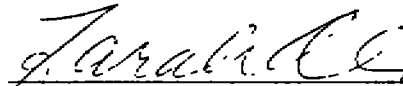
Dated: April 16, 2012

**VERIFICATION AND CERTIFICATION THAT RAIL LINE MEETS  
CRITERIA OF 49 C.F.R. SECTION 1152.50(b)**

STATE OF TEXAS )  
 )  
 ) ss.  
TARRANT COUNTY )

I hereby certify that no local traffic has been handled to or from any customer over the rail line located between Milepost 42.08 at Grafton and Milepost 60.20 at Glasston, in Walsh and Pembina Counties, North Dakota ("the Line") for at least two years. Also, no overhead traffic has been handled on the Line for at least two years. Further, no formal complaint filed by a user of rail service on the Line (or a State or local government entity acting on behalf of such user) regarding cessation of service over the Line either is pending with the Surface Transportation Board or any U.S. District Court or has been decided in favor of a complainant within the two-year period.

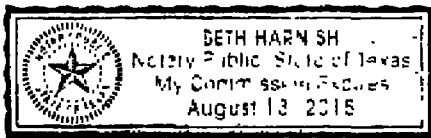
The foregoing certification is made on behalf of BNSF by the undersigned after due and careful investigation of the matters herein certified and based on the best of the knowledge, information and belief of the undersigned.



Farah Ali  
Manager Network Studies

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN TO before me this 10 day of April, 2012.

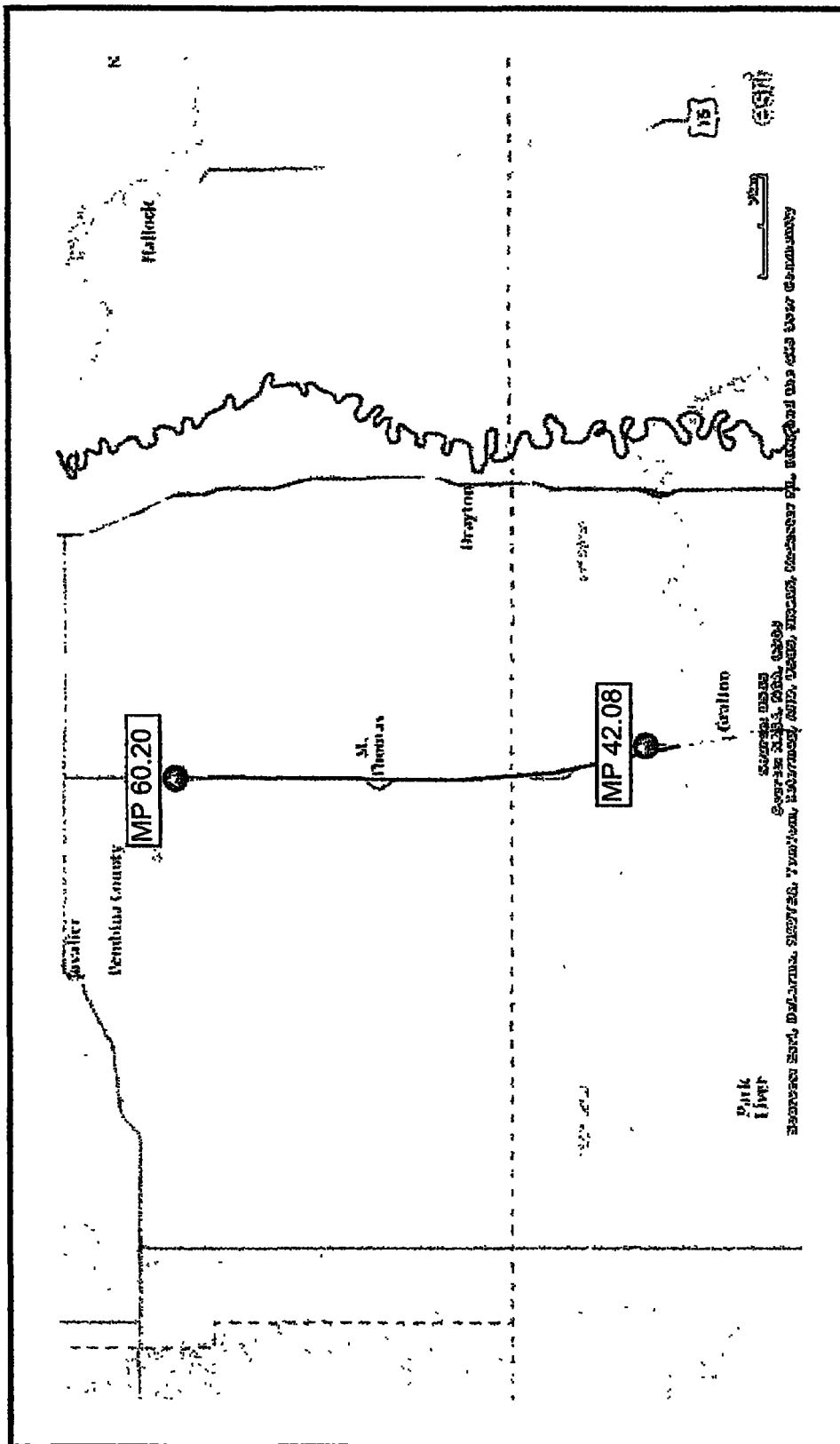
My Commission Expires: \_\_\_\_\_



Notary Public



4165  
711151



## **EXHIBIT C**

### **CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

Pursuant to 49 C.F.R. § 1152.50(d)(1), the undersigned hereby certifies that notice of the proposed abandonment in STB Docket No. AB 6 (Sub-No. 481X) was mailed via first class mail on April 5, 2012, to the following parties:

#### **State Public Service Commission**

North Dakota Public Service Commission  
600 E. Boulevard. Dept. 408  
Bismarck, ND 58505-0480

#### **Military Traffic Management Command**

MTMC TEA  
ATTN: SDTE-SE  
Railroads for National Defense  
709 Ward Drive, Building 1990  
Scott AFB, IL 62225-5357

#### **National Park Service**


U.S. Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
Recreation Resources Assistance Division  
1849 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20240-0001

Mr. Michael Reynolds, Regional Dir.  
Midwest Region  
National Park Service  
601 Riverfront Drive  
Omaha, NE 68102-4226

#### **U.S. Department of Agriculture**

U.S. Department of Agriculture  
Chief of the Forest Service  
4th Floor N.W., Yates Building  
201 14<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20250

Dated: April 16, 2012

  
Karl Morell

## CERTIFICATE OF PUBLICATION

The undersigned hereby certifies that notice of the proposed abandonment in STB Docket No. AB 6 (Sub-No. 481X) was published on April 11, 2012, in The Walsh County Record, a newspaper of general circulation in Walsh and Pembina Counties, North Dakota as required by 49 C.F.R. § 1105.12.

Dated: April 16, 2012

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Karl Morell", written over a horizontal line.

Karl Morell

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE  
ENVIRONMENTAL AND HISTORIC REPORTS**

The undersigned hereby certifies that, in STB Docket No. AB 6 (Sub-No. 481X) the transmittal letter required by 49 C.F.R § 1105.11, was mailed to all agencies listed in 49 C.F.R. § 1105.7(b). as well as the additional agencies listed below via first class mail on March 26, 2012.

Pursuant to the requirements of 49 C.F.R. § 1105.7 and 1105.8. the undersigned hereby certifies that copies of the Environmental and Historic Reports were mailed via first class mail on March 26, 2012 to the following agencies:

Ms. Victoria Rutson  
Chief, Section of Environmental Analysis  
Surface Transportation Board  
395 E Street S.W.  
Washington. DC 20423-0001

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U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
North Dakota Field Office  
99 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue West, Suite A  
Dickinson, ND 58601

City of Grafton  
City Hall  
5 East 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
P.O. Box 578  
Grafton, ND 58237

Pembina County  
Planning Office  
301 Dakota Street W. #1  
Cavalier, ND 58220

Walsh County  
Planning Office  
Administration Building  
638 Cooper Avenue, Suite #2  
Grafton, ND 58237

The National Geodetic Survey  
Department of Commerce/NOAA  
SSMC3  
Station 9356  
1315 East West Highway  
Silver Spring, MD 20910

North Dakota State Water Commission  
900 East Boulevard Avenue  
Bismarck, ND 58505-0850

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Region 8  
1595 Wynkoop St.  
Denver, CO 80202-1129

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Mountain-Prairie Region  
134 Union Blvd.  
Lakewood, CO 80228

Mr. Michael Reynolds, Regional Director  
Midwest Region  
National Park Service  
601 Riverfront Drive  
Omaha, NE 68102-4226

North Dakota NRCS State Office  
Natural Resources Conservation Service  
220 East Rosser Avenue  
Federal Building, Room 270  
Bismarck, ND 58501

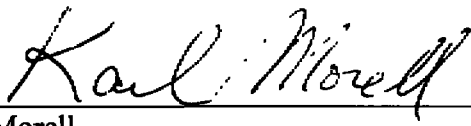
State Historical Society of North Dakota  
612 East Boulevard Ave.  
Bismarck, ND 58505

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
St. Paul District  
180 5<sup>th</sup> St. East, Suite 700  
St. Paul, MN 55101-1678

North Dakota Department of Transportation  
ATTN: Rail Planner  
608 East Boulevard Avenue  
Bismarck, ND 58505-0700

North Dakota Public Service Commission  
600 E. Boulevard, Dept. 408  
Bismarck, ND 58505-0480

Dated April 16, 2012

  
Karl Morell

**BEFORE THE  
SURFACE TRANSPORTATION BOARD**

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<b>BNSF RAILWAY COMPANY</b>	<b>)</b>	
<b>ABANDONMENT EXEMPTION</b>	<b>)</b>	<b>DOCKET NO. AB 6</b>
<b>IN WALSH AND PEMBINA COUNTIES,</b>	<b>)</b>	<b>(SUB-NO. 481X)</b>
<b>NORTH DAKOTA</b>		

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**ENVIRONMENTAL AND HISTORIC REPORTS**

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**BNSF RAILWAY COMPANY**  
2650 Lou Menk Drive  
P.O. Box 96157  
Fort Worth, TX 76161-0057

**Courtney Biery Estes**  
General Attorney  
BNSF Railway Company  
2500 Lou Menk Drive, AOB-3  
Fort Worth, Texas 76131-2828

**Karl Morell**  
Of Counsel  
BALL JANIK LLP  
Suite 225  
655 Fifteenth Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20005  
(202) 638-3307

**Service Date:** March 26, 2012

## **ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT**

**(49 C.F.R. § 1105.7)**

***(1) Proposed Action and Alternatives. Describe the proposed action, including commodities transported, the planned disposition (if any) of any rail line and other structures that may be involved, and any possible changes in current operations or maintenance practices. Also describe any reasonable alternatives to the proposed action. Include a readable, detailed map and drawings clearly delineating the project.***

BNSF Railway Company ("BNSF") proposes to abandon the 18.12-mile rail line located between Milepost 42.08 in Grafton and ending at the end of the line at Milepost 60.20 in Glasston. in Walsh and Pembina Counties, North Dakota (the "Line"). A map of the project area is attached as **Exhibit A**.

The Dakota Northern Railroad, Inc. ("DNR") is currently leasing the Line from BNSF. In October, 2009, DNR filed to discontinue service over the Line and was granted authority by the Surface Transportation Board ("STB") in early 2010. *See* STB Docket No. 1041X, *Dakota Northern Railroad, Inc. – Discontinuance of Service Exemption – in Walsh and Pembina Counties, ND* (not printed), served January 22, 2010. BNSF intends to exercise the abandonment authority and convert the portion of the Line between Milepost 42.08 and Milepost 52.50 to industry track. The remainder of the Line between Milepost 52.50 and Milepost 60.20 will be abandoned.

BNSF's salvage process as it relates to this project is as follows:

The proposed abandonment will include the removal of the rails, ties, and bridges. The railroad right-of-way, ballast and culverts will remain in place.

The salvage process begins with the unbolting of the track materials or rails. With the

use of specialized machinery placed on the railroad right-of-way, the rails and related steel (angle bars, tie plates, spikes, switches and any other metal parts) are removed. Next the wooden ties are raised from the ballast with a tool designed for minimum disruption of ground material. The ties are separated into three groups as follows: (1) good quality ties that will be re-used in rail service, (2) landscape-quality ties that will be sold to lumber dealers for landscaping and (3) scrap ties. Scrap ties are loaded into railcars and shipped by BNSF to an EPA-approved disposal site.

The culverts, ballast and right-of-way will remain intact so as not to alter the prevailing waterflows along the line. In addition, BNSF salvage contractors are required to limit their activities to the width of the right-of-way and not to place fills or other material in water bodies, including inland waterways. When the salvage process is complete, waterflows in the area should not be disrupted.

Finally, road crossings are removed and remediated, then repaved with gravel, asphalt or concrete, as required by governing authority. Any signals are also dismantled and removed.

BNSF salvage work for abandonments is always performed by experienced rail material salvagers and is generally bid on the open market. Each salvage contract includes detailed information on any environmental or historical conditions recommended by the Office of Environmental Analysis ("OEA") and imposed by the STB in the final decision. Completed work is independently inspected by a BNSF roadmaster (or equal representative) to ensure compliance with BNSF standards of quality and all contractual obligations, including STB-imposed conditions, if applicable.



The Line has had no traffic since 2009. The Line is stub-ended and, therefore, not capable of handling overhead traffic. Due to lack of traffic on the Line, very limited maintenance has been performed on the Line. Therefore, the proposed abandonment will have no impact on rail freight operations and maintenance practices on the Line.

The only alternative to abandonment would be to not abandon the Line and forego the opportunity costs from salvaging a portion of the Line.

**(2) Transportation System Describe the effect of the proposed action on regional or local transportation systems and patterns. Estimate the amount of traffic (passenger or freight) that will be diverted to other transportation systems or modes as a result of the proposed action.**

There will be no passenger or freight traffic diverted to other transportation systems as a result of the proposed abandonment. Since 2009, the line has been embargoed and there has been no local or overhead traffic on this line. .

**(3) Land Use**

**(i) Based on consultation with local and/or regional planning agencies and/or review of the official planning documents prepared by such agencies, state whether the proposed action is consistent with existing land use plans. Describe any inconsistencies.**

BNSF believes that the proposed action is consistent with existing land use plans.

BNSF contacted the City of Grafton - City Hall, Pembina County – Planning Office, and Walsh County – Planning Office. As of the date of this Environmental Report, none of the agencies has responded as to whether the proposed action is consistent with existing land use plans. Copies of the letters are attached as **Exhibit B**.

**(ii) Based on consultation with the U.S. Soil Conservation Service, state the**

***effect of the proposed action on any prime agriculture land.***

BNSF does not believe that the proposed abandonment will have an adverse effect on prime agriculture land. BNSF sent a letter to the North Dakota NRCS State Office, Natural Resources Conservation Service. Mr. Michael G. Ulmer, State Soil Scientist/MO 7 Leader (Acting), replied in a letter dated February 28, 2012, stating: "Your proposed project appears to be within the existing railroad right-of-way; therefore, FPPA (Farmland Protection Policy Act) has previously been addressed and no further action is required." A copy of the letter is attached as **Exhibit C.**

***(iii) If any action affects land or water uses within a designated coastal zone, include the coastal zone information required by § 1105.9.***

Not applicable.

***(iv) If the proposed action is an abandonment, state whether or not the right-of-way is suitable for alternative public use under 49 U.S.C. § 10905 and explain why.***

The portion of the Line between Milepost 52.50 and Milepost 60.20 may be suitable for alternative public use. BNSF contacted the City of Grafton - City Hall, Pembina County – Planning Office, and Walsh County – Planning Office. **See Exhibit B.**

***(4) Energy***

***(i) Describe the effect of the proposed action on transportation of energy resources.***

The proposed abandonment will have no effect on the transportation of energy resources.

**(ii) Describe the effect of the proposed action on recyclable commodities.**

The proposed abandonment will not adversely affect the movement or recovery of recyclable commodities.

**(iii) State whether the proposed action will result in an increase or decrease in overall energy efficiency and explain why.**

The proposed action will not result in an increase or decrease in overall energy efficiency as there has been no traffic on the Line since 2009.

**(iv) If the proposed action will cause diversions from rail to motor carriage of more than:**

**(A) 1,000 rail carloads a year, or**

**(B) an average of 50 rail carloads per mile per year for any part of the affected line, quantify the resulting net change in the energy consumption and show the data and methodology used to arrive at the figure given.**

The proposed abandonment will not result in a diversion of rail to motor carriage.

**(5) Air**

**(i) If the proposed action will result in either:**

**(A) an increase in rail traffic of at least 100 percent (measured in gross ton miles annually) or an increase of at least eight trains a day on any segment of the line affected by the proposal, or**

**(B) an increase in rail yard activity of at least 100 percent (measured by carload activity), or**

**(C) an average increase in truck traffic of more than 10 percent of the average daily traffic or 50 vehicles a day on any affected road segment, quantify the anticipated effect on air emissions.**

The proposed action will not result in meeting or exceeding the specified thresholds for increased rail or truck traffic as outlined in (i) (A), (B) or (C) above.

**(ii) If the proposed action affects a class I or nonattainment area under the Clean Air Act, and will result in either:**

**(A) an increase in rail traffic of at least 50 percent (measured in gross ton miles annually) or an increase of at least three trains a day on any segment of rail line,**

**(B) an increase in rail yard activity of at least 20 percent (measured by carload activity), or**

**(C) an average increase in truck traffic of more than 10 percent of the average daily traffic or 50 vehicles a day on a given road segment, then state whether any expected increased emissions are within the parameters established by State Implementation Plan. However, for a rail construction under 49 U.S.C. § 10901 (or 49 U.S.C. § 10505) or a case involving the reinstitution of service over a previously abandoned line, only the three train a day threshold in this item shall apply.**

The proposed action will not result in meeting or exceeding the specified thresholds in (ii) (A), (B) or (C) above.

**(iii) If the transportation of ozone depleting materials (such as nitrogen oxide and Freon) is contemplated, identify: the materials and quantity; the frequency of service; safety practices (including any speed restrictions); the applicant's safety record (to the extent available) on derailments, accidents and spills; contingency plans to deal with accidental spills; and the likelihood of an accidental release of ozone depleting materials in the event of a collision or derailment.**

The proposed abandonment will not affect the transportation of ozone depleting materials.

**(6) Noise If any of the thresholds identified in item (5) (i) of this section are surpassed, state whether the proposed action will cause:**

**(i) an incremental increase in noise levels of three decibels Ldn or more; or**

**(ii) an increase to a noise level of 65 decibels Ldn or greater. If so, identify sensitive receptors (e.g. schools, libraries, hospitals, residences, retirement communities and nursing homes) in the project area and quantify the noise increase for these receptors if the thresholds are surpassed.**

Not applicable.

**(7) Safety**

***(i) Describe any effects of the proposed action on public health and safety (including vehicle delay time at railroad crossings).***

This abandonment should have no adverse effect on health or public safety.

There are eight (8) private at-grade crossings (seven active and one closed) and thirty-two (32) public at-grade crossings (all active) on the Line.

***(ii) If hazardous materials are expected to be transported, identify: the materials and quantity; the frequency of service; whether chemicals are being transported that, if mixed, could react to form more hazardous compounds; safety practices (including any speed restrictions); the applicant's safety record (to the extent available) on derailments, accidents and hazardous spills; the contingency plans to deal with accidental spills, and the likelihood of an accidental release of hazardous materials.***

The abandonment will not result in the transportation of hazardous materials.

***(iii) If there are any known hazardous waste sites or sites where there have been known hazardous material spills on the right-of-way, identify the location of those sites and the types of hazardous materials involved.***

There are no known hazardous waste sites or sites where there have been known hazardous material spills on the right-of-way.

**(8) Biological Resources**

***(i) Based on consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, state whether the proposed action is likely to adversely affect endangered or threatened species or areas designated as a critical habitat, and if so, describe the effects.***

BNSF does not believe that the proposed abandonment will have an adverse effect on endangered or threatened species or areas designated as a critical habitat. BNSF contacted the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Mountain-Prairie Region, in reference to this proposed abandonment. As of the date of this Environmental Report, the agency has not replied to BNSF's inquiry. A copy of the letter is

attached as **Exhibit D**.

***(ii) State whether wildlife sanctuaries or refuges, National or State parks or forests will be affected, and describe any effects.***

BNSF does not believe that any wildlife sanctuaries or refuges, National or State parks or forests will be adversely affected by the proposed abandonment. BNSF contacted the U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management (North Dakota Field Office), and the National Park Service, Midwest Region. As of the date of this Environmental Report, neither agency has responded to our inquiries. Copies of the letters are attached as **Exhibit E**.

***(9) Water***

***(i) Based on consultation with State water quality officials, state whether the proposed action is consistent with applicable Federal, State or local water quality standards. Describe any inconsistencies.***

BNSF contacted the North Dakota State Water Commission ("Water Commission") and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 8 ("EPA") regarding the proposed abandonment. The Water Commission responded as follows:

"There are no floodplains identified and/or mapped where this proposed project is to take place. The area is designated as a Zone X. It is also believed that the project will not affect an identified floodplain as identified by the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

It is the responsibility of the project sponsor to ensure that local, state and federal agencies are contacted for any required approvals, permits, and easements.

All waste material associated with the project must be disposed of properly and not placed in identified floodway areas.

No sole-source aquifers have been designated in ND."

As of the date of this Environmental Report, EPA has not responded to BNSF's

inquiry. Copies of the letters are attached as **Exhibit F**.

***(ii) Based on consultation with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, state whether permits under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. § 1344) are required for the proposed action and whether any designated wetlands or 100-year flood plains will be affected. Describe the effects.***

BNSF is confident that no designated wetlands or 100-year flood plains will be adversely affected by the proposed abandonment. BNSF contacted the St. Paul District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in reference to the proposed abandonment. As of the date of this Environmental Report, the agency has not responded to BNSF's inquiry. A copy of the letter is attached as **Exhibit G**.

***(iii) State whether permits under Section 402 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. § 1342) are required for the proposed action. (Applicants should contact the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency or the state environmental protection or equivalent agency if they are unsure whether such permits are required).***

BNSF contacted the North Dakota State Water Commission and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 8 regarding the proposed abandonment. As of the date of this Environmental Report, neither agency has responded to BNSF's inquiry. Copies of the letters are attached as **Exhibit F**.

***(10) Proposed Mitigation. Describe any actions that are proposed to mitigate adverse environmental impacts, indicating why the proposed mitigation is appropriate.***

BNSF does not expect any adverse environmental impact from the proposed abandonment and, therefore, sees no need for any mitigating actions. BNSF will, of course, consult (as required) with any recipients of this Environmental Report regarding appropriate mitigation actions and will comply with those mitigation actions required by the STB.

## **HISTORIC REPORT**

### **(49 C.F.R. § 1105.8)**

***(1) Proposed Action and Alternatives. Describe the proposed action, including commodities transported, the planned disposition (if any) of any rail line and other structures that may be involved, and any possible changes in current operations or maintenance practices. Also describe any reasonable alternatives to the proposed action. Include a readable, detailed map and drawings clearly delineating the project.***

BNSF Railway Company (“BNSF”) proposes to abandon the 18.12-mile rail line located between Milepost 42.08 in Grafton and ending at the end of the line at Milepost 60.20 at Glasston in Walsh and Pembina Counties, North Dakota (the “Line”). A map of the project area is attached as **Exhibit A**.

The Dakota Northern Railroad, Inc. (“DNR”) is currently leasing the Line from BNSF. In October, 2009, DNR filed to discontinue service over the Line and was granted authority by the Surface Transportation Board (“STB”) in early 2010. See STB Docket No. 1041X, *Dakota Northern Railroad, Inc. – Discontinuance of Service Exemption – in Walsh and Pembina Counties, ND* (not printed), served January 22, 2010. BNSF intends to exercise the abandonment authority and convert the portion of the Line between Milepost 42.08 and Milepost 52.50 to industry track. The remainder of the Line between Milepost 52.50 and Milepost 60.20 will be abandoned.

BNSF's salvage process as it relates to this project is as follows:

The proposed abandonment will include the removal of the rails, ties, and bridges. The railroad right-of-way, ballast and culverts will remain in place.



The salvage process begins with the unbolting of the track materials or rails. With the use of specialized machinery placed on the railroad right-of-way, the rails and related steel (angle bars, tie plates, spikes, switches and any other metal parts) are removed. Next the wooden ties are raised from the ballast with a tool designed for minimum disruption of ground material. The ties are separated into three groups as follows: (1) good quality ties that will be re-used in rail service, (2) landscape-quality ties that will be sold to lumber dealers for landscaping and (3) scrap ties. Scrap ties are loaded into railcars and shipped by BNSF to an EPA-approved disposal site.

The culverts, ballast and right-of-way will remain intact so as not to alter the prevailing waterflows along the line. In addition, BNSF salvage contractors are required to limit their activities to the width of the right-of-way and not to place fills or other material in water bodies, including inland waterways. When the salvage process is complete, waterflows in the area should not be disrupted.

Finally, road crossings are removed and remediated, then repaved with gravel, asphalt or concrete, as required by governing authority. Any signals are also dismantled and removed.

BNSF salvage work for abandonments is always performed by experienced rail material salvagers and is generally bid on the open market. Each salvage contract includes detailed information on any environmental or historical conditions recommended by the Office of Environmental Analysis ("OEA") and imposed by the STB in the final decision. Completed work is independently inspected by a BNSF roadmaster (or equal

representative) to ensure compliance with BNSF standards of quality and all contractual obligations, including STB-imposed conditions, if applicable.

The Line has had no local traffic since 2009. The Line is stub-ended and, therefore, not capable of handling overhead traffic. Due to lack of traffic on the Line, very limited maintenance has been performed on the Line. Therefore, the proposed abandonment will have no impact on rail freight operations and maintenance practices on the Line.

The only alternative to abandonment would be to not abandon the Line and forego the opportunity costs from salvaging a portion of the Line.

## **HISTORIC REPORT**

1. *A U.S.G.S. topographic map (or an alternate map drawn to scale and sufficiently detailed to show buildings and other structures in the vicinity of the proposed action) showing the location of the proposed action, and the locations and approximate dimensions of railroad structures that are 50 years old or older and are part of the proposed action.*

The required topographic map is attached to this Report as **Exhibit A**.

2. *A written description of the right-of-way (including approximate widths, to the extent known), and the topography and urban and/or rural characteristics of the surrounding area*

The subject Line extends approximately 18.12 miles between Milepost 42.08 in Grafton and the end of the Line at Milepost 60.20 in Glasston, in Walsh and Pembina Counties, North Dakota. The rural right-of-way is generally 100 to 200 feet wide and 300 feet wide in station ground (urban) areas. There are federally granted rights of way involved.

**3. *Good quality photographs (actual photographic prints, not photocopies) of railroad structures on the property that are 50 years old or older and of the immediately surrounding area.***

There are eight bridges on the Line that are 50 years old or older. They are as follows:

- 1) Milepost 42.1 – 92' long, 12' high, open deck timber trestle, built in 1964
- 2) Milepost 43.2 – 28' long, 5' high, open deck timber trestle, built in 1953
- 3) Milepost 52.9 – 109' long, 14' high, thru plate girder, built in 1909
- 4) Milepost 55.6 – 56' long, 6' high, open deck timber trestle, built in 1969
- 5) Milepost 55.9 – 56' long, 6' high, open deck timber trestle, built in 1969
- 6) Milepost 57.2 – 28' long, 6' high, open deck timber trestle, built in 1949
- 7) Milepost 58.5 – 70' long, 6' high, open deck timber trestle, built in 1956
- 8) Milepost 58.9 – 42' long, 6' high, open deck timber trestle, built in 1953

See **Exhibit H**, attached photographs.

**4. *The date(s) of construction of the structure(s), and the date(s) and extent of any major alterations, to the extent such information is known.***

There are eight bridges on the Line that are 50 years old or older. They are as follows:

- 1) Milepost 42.1 – 92' long, 12' high, open deck timber trestle, built in 1964
- 2) Milepost 43.2 – 28' long, 5' high, open deck timber trestle, built in 1953
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- 7) Milepost 58.5 – 70' long, 6' high, open deck timber trestle, built in 1956
- 8) Milepost 58.9 – 42' long, 6' high, open deck timber trestle, built in 1953

See **Exhibit H**, attached photographs.

**5. *A brief narrative history of carrier operations in the area, and an explanation of what, if any, changes are contemplated as a result of the proposed action.***

On May 23, 1879, The St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba Railway Company ("SPMM") was incorporated by Special Act of Minnesota Legislature. On November 1, 1907, SPMM sold the Line to the Great Northern Railway Company ("GN"). In 1970, GN merged with Northern Pacific Railway Company, Pacific Coast Railroad Company and Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad Company to become Burlington Northern Inc. The

latter changed its name to Burlington Northern Railroad Company ("BNRR") in 1981. BNRR merged with The Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe Railway Company in 1996 to become The Burlington Northern and Santa Fe Railway Company, which name was changed to BNSF Railway Company in 2005.

6. *A brief summary of documents in the carrier's possession, such as engineering drawings, that might be useful in documenting a structure that is found to be historic.*

Documents in BNSF's possession concerning this abandonment may include alignment maps showing the right-of-way and/or station maps. These documents are too large for practical reproduction in this report, but can be furnished upon request, if they are available.

7. *An opinion (based on readily available information in the railroad's possession) as to whether the site and/or structures meet the criteria for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (36 CFR 60.4), and whether there is a likelihood of archeological resources or any other previously unknown historic properties in the project area, and the basis for these opinions (including any consultations with the State Historic Preservation Office, local historical societies or universities).*

BNSF contacted the State Historical Society of North Dakota ("SHPO") in reference to the proposed abandonment. By letter dated February 1, 2012, Merlan E. Paaverud, Jr., State Historic Preservation Officer (North Dakota) stated: "We concur with your 'No Historic Properties Affected' determination along this segment." The letter is attached as **Exhibit I**.

8. *A description (based on readily available information in the railroad's possession) of any known prior subsurface ground disturbance or fill, environmental conditions (naturally occurring or manmade) that might affect the archeological recovery of resources (such as swampy conditions or the presence of toxic wastes), and the surrounding terrain.*

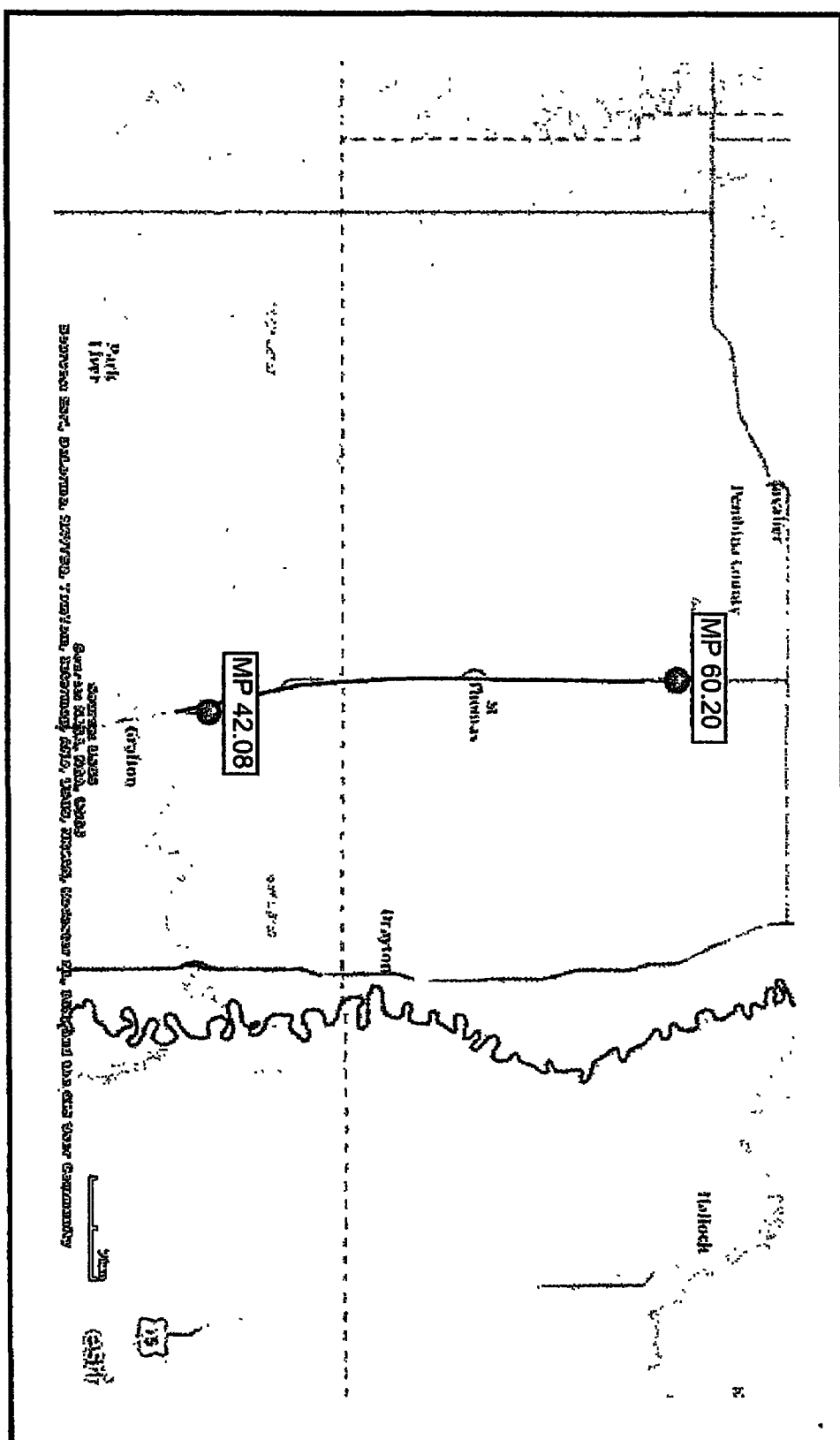
The Line was disturbed during original construction by cuts and fill and any archaeological resources that may have been located in the proposed project area would

have been affected at that time. Our records do not indicate any environmental conditions that might affect the archaeological recovery of resources.

9. ***Within 30 days of receipt of the historic report, the State Historic Preservation Officer may request the following additional information regarding specific non railroad owned properties or groups of properties immediately adjacent to the railroad right-of-way: photographs of specified properties that can be readily seen from the railroad right-of-way (or other public rights-of-way adjacent to the property) and a written description of any previously discovered archeological sites, identifying the location and type of the site (i.e. prehistoric or native American).***

If any additional information is requested, BNSF will promptly supply the necessary information.

A









**John A. Sims, CP**  
Paralegal  
Law Department

**BNSF Railway Company**  
2500 Lou Menk Drive – AOB-3  
Fort Worth, Texas 76131-2828  
tel 817-352-2376  
fax 817-352-2397  
Email - john.sims@bnsf.com

January 25, 2012

City of Grafton  
City Hall  
5 East 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
P.O. Box 578  
Grafton, ND 58237

**Re: STB Docket No. AB-6 (Sub-No. 481X); BNSF Railway Company –  
Abandonment Exemption – in Walsh and Pembina Counties, North Dakota**

BNSF Railway Company ("BNSF") anticipates filing in a few weeks a Notice of Exemption seeking Surface Transportation Board ("STB") authority in the above-referenced docket to abandon 18.12 miles of rail line in Walsh and Pembina Counties, North Dakota, beginning at Milepost 42.08 in Grafton and ending at the end of the line at Milepost 60.20 in Glasston.

As part of the environmental report, BNSF is required to contact you to determine if the proposed abandonment is consistent with existing land use plans. If applicable, please describe any inconsistencies.

Your assessment and comments are respectfully requested. For your reference a map of the subject railroad line is enclosed. Please provide your response to me at the address above, if at all possible, by February 29, 2012. You may contact me by email or phone with any questions or concerns. Thank you in advance for your time and contribution.

Sincerely,

John A. Sims, CP  
Paralegal

Enclosure as stated

cc via email: Courtney Estes – BNSF – [courtney.estes@bnsf.com](mailto:courtney.estes@bnsf.com)  
Karl Morell – Ball Janik LLP – [kmorell@bjllp.com](mailto:kmorell@bjllp.com)  
Susan Odom – BNSF [susan.odom@bnsf.com](mailto:susan.odom@bnsf.com)  
Mark Norton – BNSF – [mark.norton@bnsf.com](mailto:mark.norton@bnsf.com)  
Farah Ali – BNSF – [farah.ali@bnsf.com](mailto:farah.ali@bnsf.com)



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tel 817-352-2376  
fax 817-352-2397  
Email - john.sims@bnsf.com

January 25, 2012

Pembina County  
Planning Office  
301 Dakota Street W. #1  
Cavalier, ND 58220

**Re: STB Docket No. AB-6 (Sub-No. 481X); BNSF Railway Company –  
Abandonment Exemption – in Walsh and Pembina Counties, North Dakota**

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Sincerely,

John A. Sims, CP  
Paralegal

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Susan Odom – BNSF – [susan.odom@bnsf.com](mailto:susan.odom@bnsf.com)  
Mark Norton – BNSF – [mark.norton@bnsf.com](mailto:mark.norton@bnsf.com)  
Farah Ali – BNSF – [farah.ali@bnsf.com](mailto:farah.ali@bnsf.com)



**John A. Sims, CP**  
Paralegal  
Law Department

**BNSF Railway Company**  
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Fort Worth, Texas 76131-2828  
tel 817-352-2376  
fax 817-352-2397  
Email - john.sims@bnsf.com

January 25, 2012

Walsh County  
Planning Office  
Administration Building  
638 Cooper Avenue, Suite #2  
Grafton, ND 58237

**Re: STB Docket No. AB-6 (Sub-No. 481X) BNSF Railway Company –  
Abandonment Exemption – in Walsh and Pembina Counties, North Dakota**

BNSF Railway Company ("BNSF") anticipates filing in a few weeks a Notice of Exemption seeking Surface Transportation Board ("STB") authority in the above-referenced docket to abandon 18.12 miles of rail line in Walsh and Pembina Counties, North Dakota, beginning at Milepost 42.08 in Grafton and ending at the end of the line at Milepost 60.20 in Glasston.

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Paralegal

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Susan Odom – BNSF – [susan.odom@bnsf.com](mailto:susan.odom@bnsf.com)  
Mark Norton – BNSF – [mark.norton@bnsf.com](mailto:mark.norton@bnsf.com)  
Farah Ali – BNSF – [farah.ali@bnsf.com](mailto:farah.ali@bnsf.com)

C

United States Department of Agriculture



Natural Resources Conservation Service  
P.O. Box 1458  
Bismarck, ND 58502-1458

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February 28, 2012

John A. Sims  
BNSF Railway Company  
2500 Lou Menk Drive – AOB-3  
Fort Worth, Texas 76131-2828

RE: STB Docket No AB-6 (Sub-No. 481X); BNSF Railway Company –  
Abandonment Exemption – in Walsh and Pembina Counties, North Dakota

Dear Mr. Sims:

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) has reviewed your letter dated January 25, 2012, concerning abandonment of a railroad in Walsh and Pembina Counties, North Dakota.

NRCS has a major responsibility with the Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA) in documenting conversion of farmland (i.e., prime, statewide, and local importance) to non-agricultural use when federal funding is utilized. Your proposed project appears to be within the existing railroad right-of-way; therefore, FPPA has previously been addressed and no further action is required.

If you have additional questions pertaining to FPPA, please contact Steve Sieler, State Soil Liaison, at (701) 530-2019.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael G. Ulmer".

MICHAEL G. ULMER  
State Soil Scientist/MO 7 Leader (Acting)

*Helping People Help the Land*

An Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer



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**John A. Sims, CP**  
Paralegal  
Law Department

**BNSF Railway Company**  
2500 Lou Menk Drive – AOB-3  
Fort Worth, Texas 76131-2828  
tel 817-352-2376  
fax 817-352-2397  
Email - john.sims@bnsf.com

January 25, 2012

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Mountain-Prairie Region  
134 Union Blvd.  
Lakewood, CO 80228

**Re: STB Docket No. AB-6 (Sub-No. 481X); BNSF Railway Company –  
Abandonment Exemption – in Walsh and Pembina Counties, North Dakota**

BNSF Railway Company ("BNSF") anticipates filing in a few weeks a Notice of Exemption seeking Surface Transportation Board ("STB") authority in the above-referenced docket to abandon 18.12 miles of rail line in Walsh and Pembina Counties, North Dakota, beginning at Milepost 42.08 in Grafton and ending at the end of the line at Milepost 60.20 in Glasston.

As part of the requisite environmental report, BNSF needs to know: 1) whether or not there are any endangered or threatened species, wildlife sanctuaries or refuges, or areas designated as critical habitat adjacent to or near the line, and 2) if so, what effects the proposed action may have on same.

For your reference I have enclosed a map of the subject railroad line. Following is information on BNSF's salvage process as it relates to this project that should also be of use:

The proposed abandonment will include the removal of the rails, ties and bridges; however, the railroad right of way, ballast and culverts will remain in place.

The salvage process begins with the unbolting of the track materials or rails. With the use of specialized machinery placed on the railroad right of way, the rails and related steel (angle bars, tie plates, spikes, switches and any other metal parts) are removed. Next the wooden ties are raised from among the ballast with a tool designed for minimum disruption of ground material. The ties are separated into three groups as follows: (1) good quality ties that will be re-used in rail service, (2) landscape-quality ties that will be re-sold to lumber dealers for landscaping, and (3) scrap ties. Scrap ties are loaded into railcars and shipped by BNSF to an EPA-approved disposal site.

The culverts and right of way will remain intact so as not to alter the prevailing waterflows along the line. In addition, BNSF salvage contractors are required to limit their activities to the width of the right of way and **not** to place fills or other material in water bodies, including inland waterways. When the salvage process is complete, waterflows in the area should not be disrupted.

Finally, road crossings are removed and remediated, then repaved with gravel, asphalt or concrete, as required by governing authority. Any signals are also dismantled and removed.

BNSF salvage work for abandonments is always performed by experienced rail material salvagers and is generally bid on the open market. Each salvage contract includes detailed information on any environmental or historical conditions recommended by the Office of Environmental Analysis and imposed by the Surface Transportation Board in their final decision. Completed work is independently inspected by a BNSF roadmaster (or equal representative) to ensure compliance with BNSF standards of quality and all contractual obligations, including STB-imposed conditions, if applicable.

Please provide your assessment and comments to me at the address above, if at all possible, by February 29, 2012. You may contact me by email or phone with any questions or concerns.

Thank you in advance for your time and contribution.

Sincerely,



John A. Sims, CP  
Paralegal

Enclosure as stated

cc via email: Courtney Estes – BNSF – [courtney.estes@bnsf.com](mailto:courtney.estes@bnsf.com)  
Karl Morell – Ball Janik LLP – [kmorell@bjllp.com](mailto:kmorell@bjllp.com)  
Susan Odom – BNSF - [susan.odom@bnsf.com](mailto:susan.odom@bnsf.com)  
Mark Norton – BNSF – [mark.norton@bnsf.com](mailto:mark.norton@bnsf.com)  
Farah Ali – BNSF – [farah.ali@bnsf.com](mailto:farah.ali@bnsf.com)



E

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**John A. Sims, CP**  
Paralegal  
Law Department

**BNSF Railway Company**  
2500 Lou Menk Drive – AOB-3  
Fort Worth, Texas 76131-2828  
tel 817-352-2376  
fax 817-352-2397  
Email – john.sims@bnsf.com

January 25, 2012

U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
North Dakota Field Office  
99 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue West, Suite A  
Dickinson, ND 58601

**Re: STB Docket No. AB-6 (Sub-No. 481X); BNSF Railway Company –  
Abandonment Exemption – in Walsh and Pembina Counties, North Dakota**

BNSF Railway Company ("BNSF") anticipates filing in a few weeks a Notice of Exemption seeking Surface Transportation Board ("STB") authority in the above-referenced docket to abandon 18.12 miles of rail line in Walsh and Pembina Counties, North Dakota, beginning at Milepost 42.08 in Grafton and ending at the end of the line at Milepost 60.20 in Glasston.

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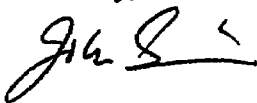
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Thank you in advance for your time and contribution.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John A. Sims', with a stylized flourish at the end.

John A. Sims, CP  
Paralegal

Enclosure as stated

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Mark Norton – BNSF – [mark.norton@bnsf.com](mailto:mark.norton@bnsf.com)  
Farah Ali – [farah.ali@bnsf.com](mailto:farah.ali@bnsf.com)



**John A. Sims, CP**  
Paralegal  
Law Department

**BNSF Railway Company**  
2500 Lou Menk Drive – AOB-3  
Fort Worth, Texas 76131-2828  
tel 817-352-2376  
fax 817-352-2397  
Email - john.sims@bnsf.com

January 25, 2012

Mr. Michael Reynolds, Regional Director  
Midwest Region  
National Park Service  
601 Riverfront Drive  
Omaha, NE 68102-4226

**Re: STB Docket No. AB-6 (Sub-No. 481X); BNSF Railway Company –  
Abandonment Exemption – in Walsh and Pembina Counties, North Dakota**

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As part of the requisite environmental report, BNSF needs to know: 1) whether or not there are any wildlife sanctuaries or National or State parks or forests adjacent to or near the line, and 2) if so, what effects the proposed action may have on same.

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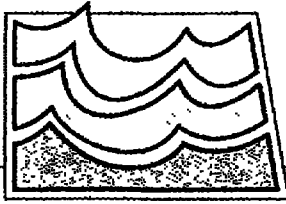


John A. Sims, CP  
Paralegal

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Susan Odom – BNSF – [susan.odom@bnsf.com](mailto:susan.odom@bnsf.com)  
Mark Norton – BNSF – [mark.norton@bnsf.com](mailto:mark.norton@bnsf.com)  
Farah Ali – BNSF – [farah.ali@bnsf.com](mailto:farah.ali@bnsf.com)

F



# North Dakota State Water Commission

900 EAST BOULEVARD AVENUE, DEPT 770 • BISMARCK, NORTH DAKOTA 58505-0850  
701-328-2750 • TDD 701-328-2750 • FAX 701-328-3696 • INTERNET: <http://swc.nd.gov>

March 13, 2012

John Sims  
BNSF Railway  
2500 Lou Menke Drive – AOB-3  
Fort Worth, TX 76131-2828

Dear Mr. Sims:

This is in response to your request for review of environmental impacts associated with the STB Docket No. AB-6 (Sub-No. 481X); BNSF Railway Company - Abandonment Exemption in Walsh and Pembina Counties, ND.

The proposed project has been reviewed by State Water Commission staff and the following comments are provided:

- There are no floodplains identified and/or mapped where this proposed project is to take place. The area is designated as a Zone X. It is also believed that the project will not affect an identified floodplain as identified by the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

- It is the responsibility of the project sponsor to ensure that local, state and federal agencies are contacted for any required approvals, permits, and easements.

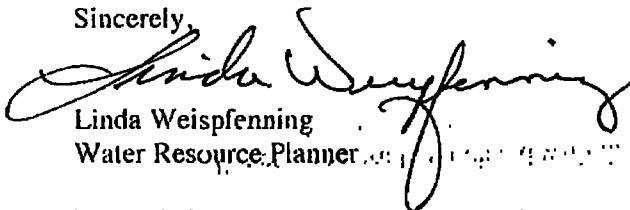
- All waste material associated with the project must be disposed of properly and not placed in identified floodway areas.

- No sole-source aquifers have been designated in ND.

There are no other concerns associated with this project that affect State Water Commission or State Engineer regulatory responsibilities.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide review comments. If you have any questions, please call me at 328-4967.

Sincerely,



Linda Weispfenning  
Water Resource Planner

LW:dp/1570



**John A. Sims, CP**  
Paralegal  
Law Department

**BNSF Railway Company**  
2500 Lou Menk Drive – AOB-3  
Fort Worth, Texas 76131-2828  
tel 817-352-2376  
fax 817-352-2397  
Email john.sims@bnsf.com

January 25, 2012

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Region 8  
1595 Wynkoop St.  
Denver, CO 80202-1129

**Re: STB Docket No. AB-6 (Sub-No. 481X); BNSF Railway Company –  
Abandonment Exemption – in Walsh and Pembina Counties, North Dakota**

BNSF Railway Company ("BNSF") anticipates filing in a few weeks a Notice of Exemption seeking Surface Transportation Board ("STB") authority in the above-referenced docket to abandon 18.12 miles of rail line in Walsh and Pembina Counties, North Dakota, beginning at Milepost 42.08 in Grafton and ending at the end of the line at Milepost 60.20 in Glasston.

As part of the requisite environmental report, BNSF needs to know: 1) whether or not this action will be consistent with Federal, State or local water quality standards, and 2) whether or not Section 402 and/or National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System ("NPDES") permits are required for performance of the salvage activity described below. Please note: **BNSF anticipates the proposed abandonment will not disturb more than one (1) acre of land.**

For your reference I have enclosed a map of the subject railroad line. Following is information on BNSF's salvage process as it relates to this project that should also be of use:

The proposed abandonment will include the removal of the rails, ties and bridges; however, the railroad right of way, ballast and culverts will remain in place.

The salvage process begins with the unbolting of the track materials or rails. With the use of specialized machinery placed on the railroad right of way, the rails and related steel (angle bars, tie plates, spikes, switches and any other metal parts) are removed. Next the wooden ties are raised from among the ballast with a tool designed for minimum disruption of ground material. The ties are separated into three groups as follows: (1) good quality ties that will be re-used in rail service, (2) landscape-quality ties that will be re-sold to lumber dealers for landscaping and (3) scrap ties. Scrap ties are loaded into railcars and shipped by BNSF to an EPA-approved disposal site.

The culverts, ballast and right of way will remain intact so as not to alter the prevailing waterflows along the line. In addition, BNSF salvage contractors are required to limit their activities to the width of the right of way and not to place fills or other material in water bodies, including inland waterways. When the salvage process is complete, waterflows in the area should not be disrupted.



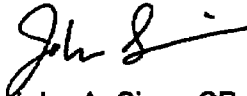
Finally, road crossings are removed and remediated, then repaved with gravel, asphalt or concrete, as required by governing authority. Any signals are also dismantled and removed.

BNSF salvage work for abandonments is always performed by experienced rail material salvagers and is generally bid on the open market. Each salvage contract includes detailed information on any environmental or historical conditions recommended by the Office of Environmental Analysis and imposed by the Surface Transportation Board in their final decision. Completed work is independently inspected by a BNSF roadmaster (or equal representative) to ensure compliance with BNSF standards of quality and all contractual obligations, including STB-imposed conditions, if applicable.

Please provide your assessment and comments to me at the address above, if at all possible, by February 29, 2012. You may contact me by email or phone with any questions or concerns.

Thank you in advance for your time and contribution.

Sincerely,



John A. Sims, CP  
Paralegal

Enclosure as stated

cc via email: Courtney Estes – BNSF – [courtney.estes@bnsf.com](mailto:courtney.estes@bnsf.com)  
Karl Morell – Ball Janik LLP – [kmorell@bjllp.com](mailto:kmorell@bjllp.com)  
Susan Odom – BNSF - [susan.odom@bnsf.com](mailto:susan.odom@bnsf.com)  
Mark Norton – BNSF – [mark.norton@bnsf.com](mailto:mark.norton@bnsf.com)  
Farah Ali – BNSF – [farah.ali@bnsf.com](mailto:farah.ali@bnsf.com)

**G**



**John A. Sims, CP**  
Paralegal  
Law Department

**BNSF Railway Company**  
2500 Lou Menk Drive – AOB-3  
Fort Worth, Texas 76131-2828  
tel 817-352-2376  
fax 817-352-2397  
Email – john.sims@bnsf.com

January 25, 2012

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
St. Paul District  
180 5<sup>th</sup> St. East  
Suite 700  
St. Paul, MN 55101-1678

**Re: STB Docket No. AB-6 (Sub-No. 481X); BNSF Railway Company –  
Abandonment Exemption – in Walsh and Pembina Counties, North Dakota**

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As part of the requisite environmental report, BNSF needs to know: 1) whether or not Section 404 permits will be required for the performance of salvage activity, and 2) if the proposed abandonment will affect any 100-year floodplains or any designated wetlands. Your assessment and comments are respectfully requested. In addition, if it is your determination that floodplains will be affected please furnish, if available, 8½" x 11" black and white maps of each designated floodplain area. Please note: **BNSF does not anticipate any potential impacts to waters of the U.S. as a result of the proposed abandonment.**

For your reference a map of the subject railroad line is enclosed. Following is information on BNSF's salvage process as it relates to this project that should also be of use:

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Please provide your assessment and comments to me at the address above, if at all possible, by February 29, 2012. You may contact me by email or phone with any questions or concerns.

Thank you in advance for your time and contribution.

Sincerely,



John A. Sims, CP  
Paralegal

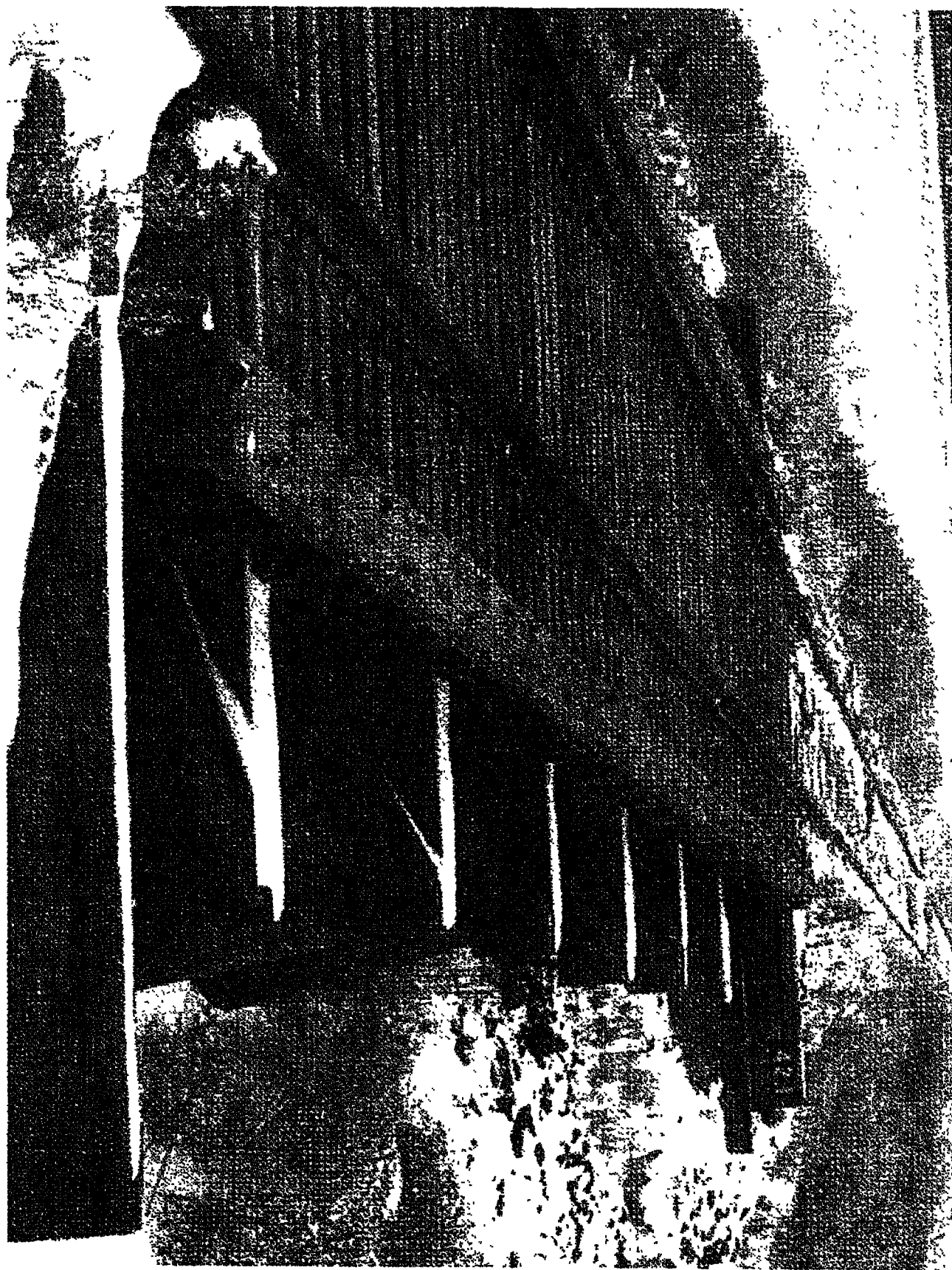
Enclosure as stated

cc via email: Courtney Estes – BNSF – [courtney.estes@bnsf.com](mailto:courtney.estes@bnsf.com)  
Karl Morell – Ball Janik LLP – [kmorell@bjllp.com](mailto:kmorell@bjllp.com)  
Susan Odom – BNSF – [susan.odom@bnsf.com](mailto:susan.odom@bnsf.com)  
Mark Norton – BNSF – [mark.norton@bnsf.com](mailto:mark.norton@bnsf.com)  
Farah Ali – BNSF – [farah.ali@bnsf.com](mailto:farah.ali@bnsf.com)

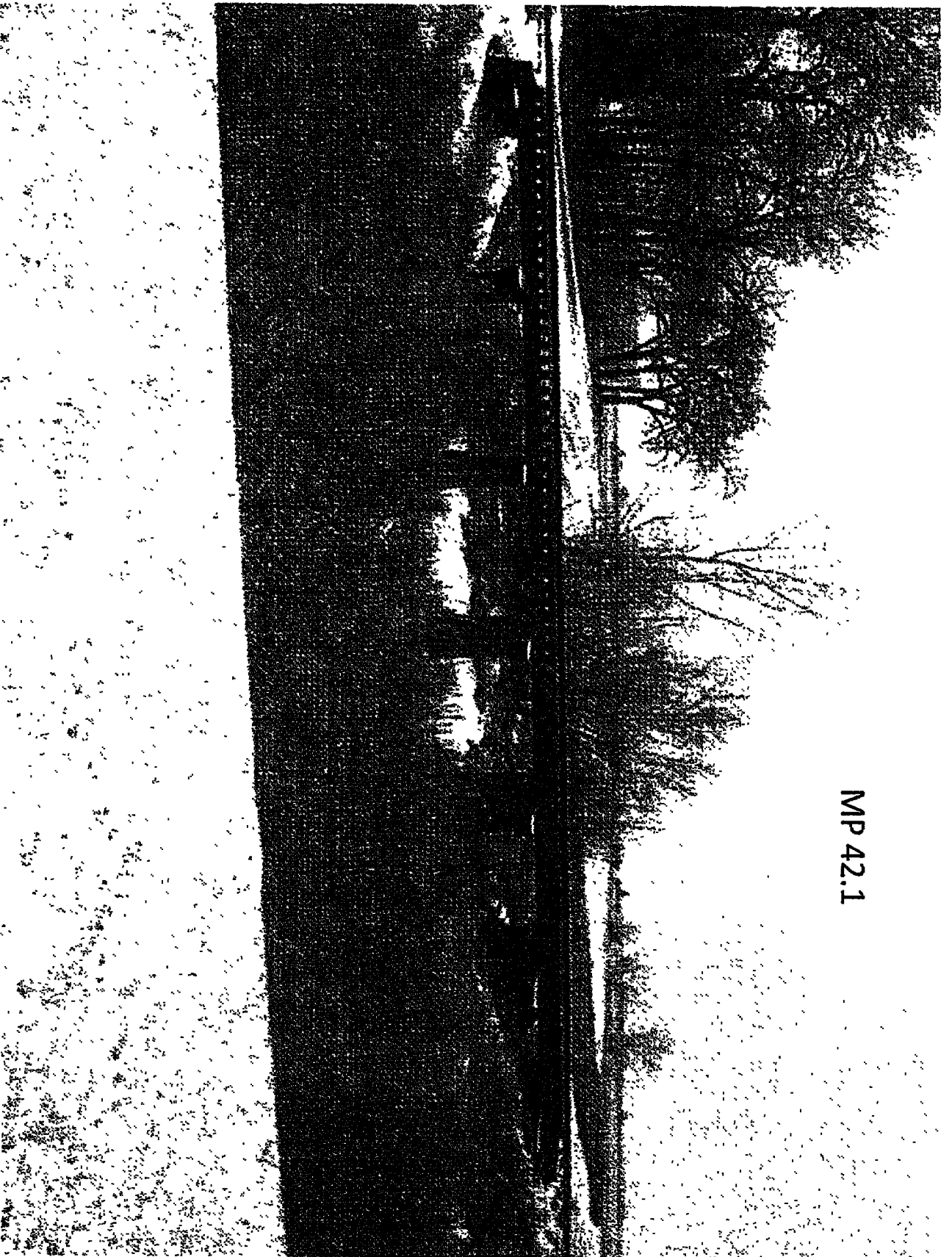
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LS 250 MP 40.08 to MP 60.20  
bridge pictures

1-23-2012



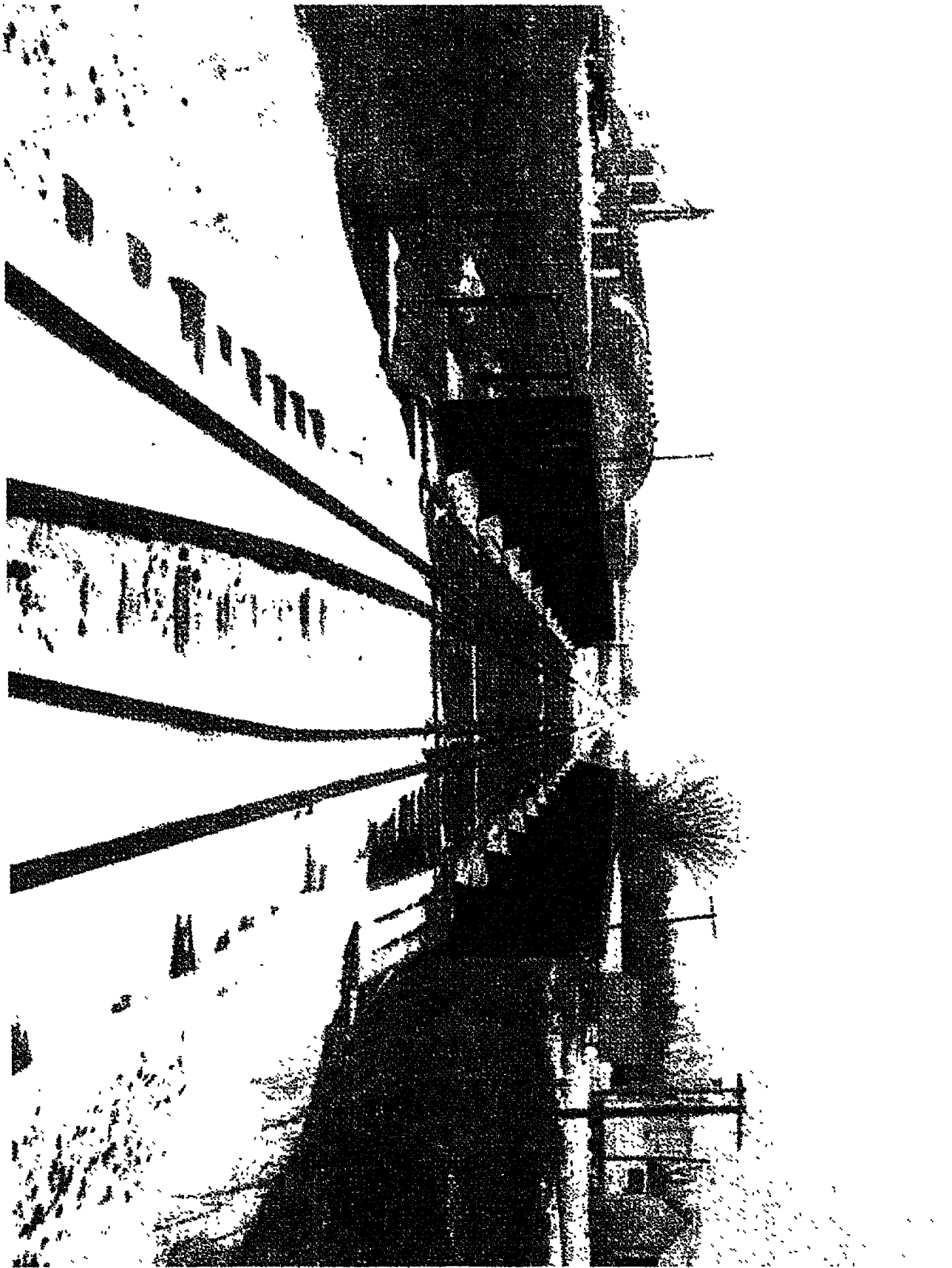
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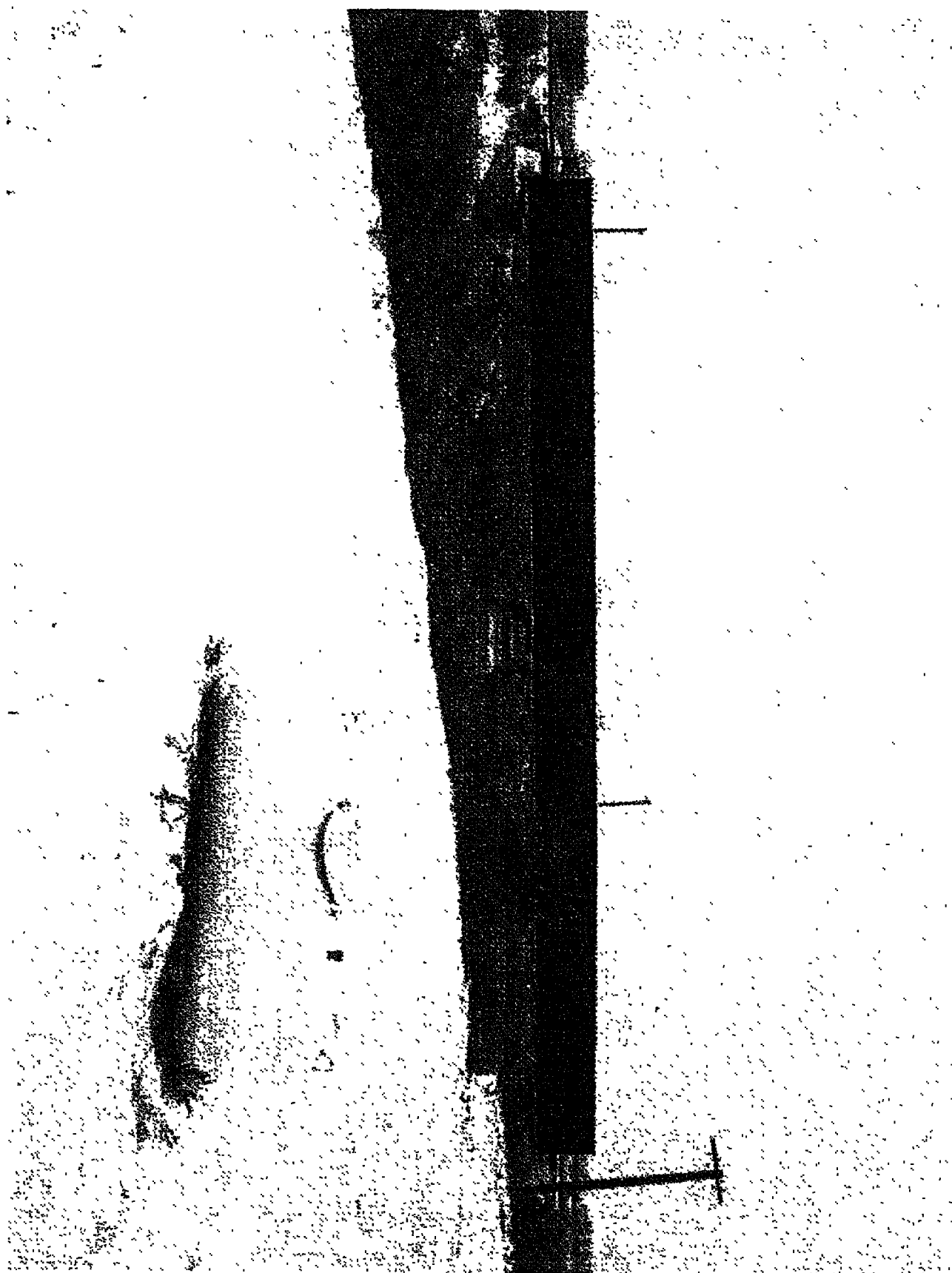


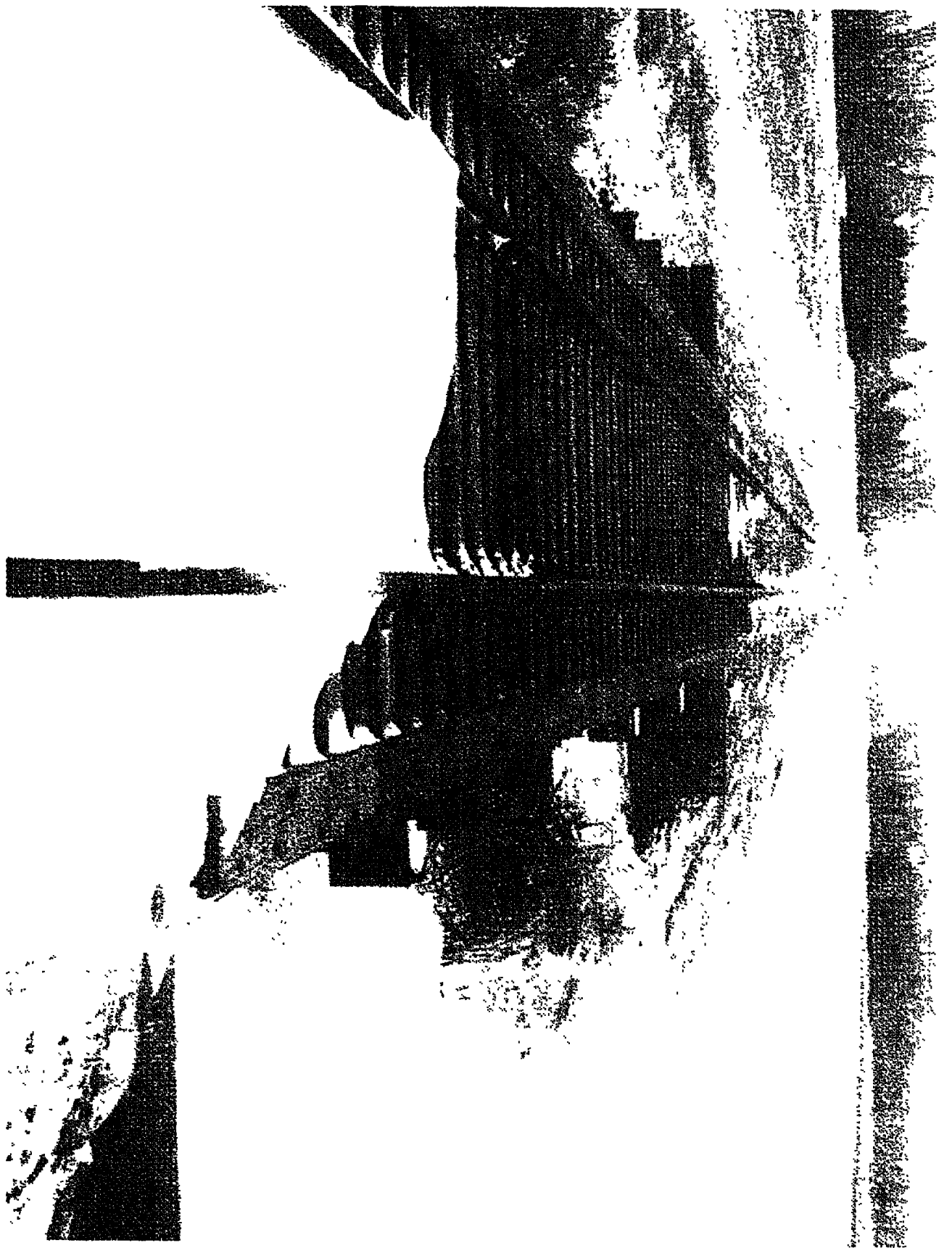


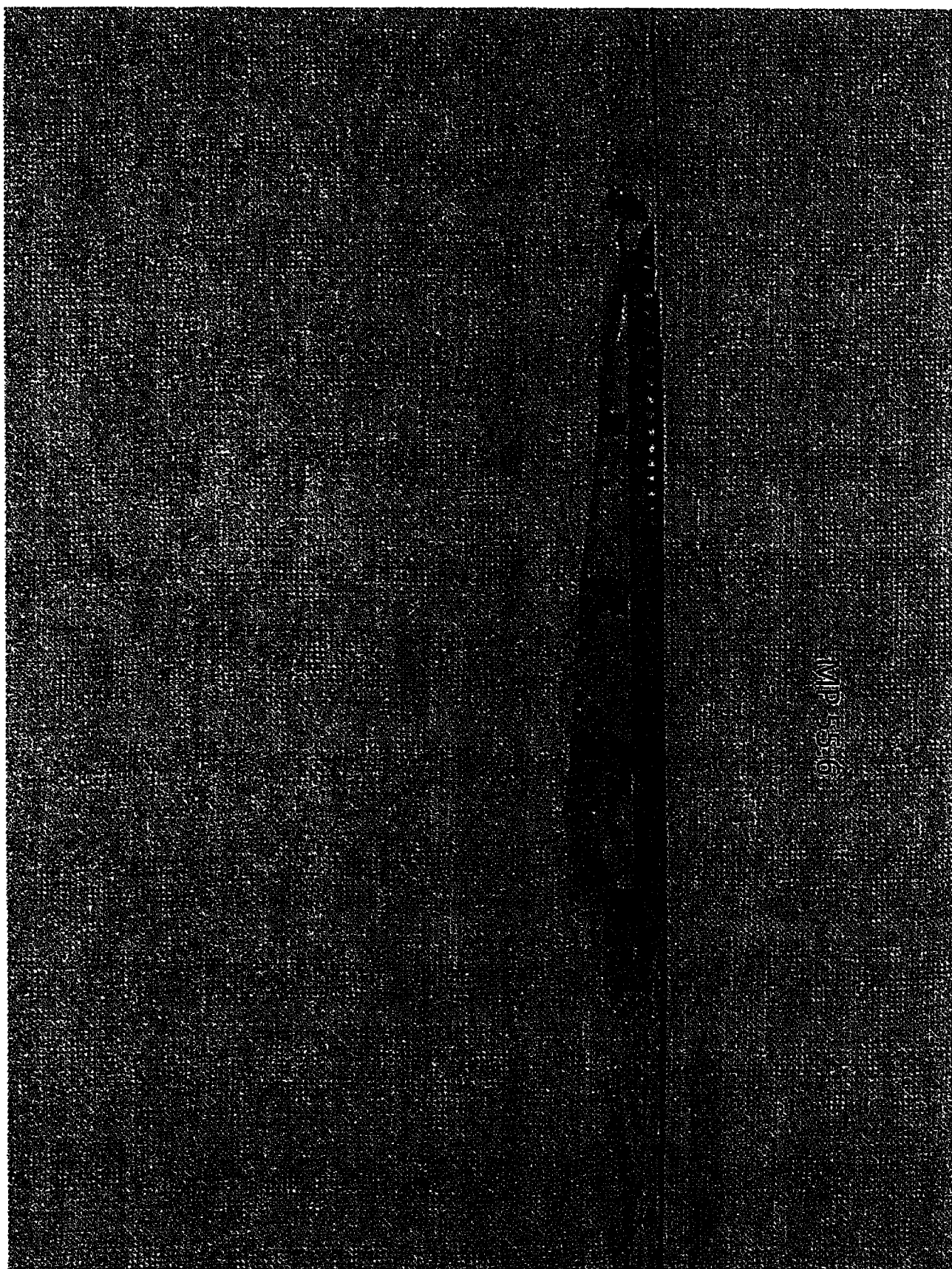


MP 432

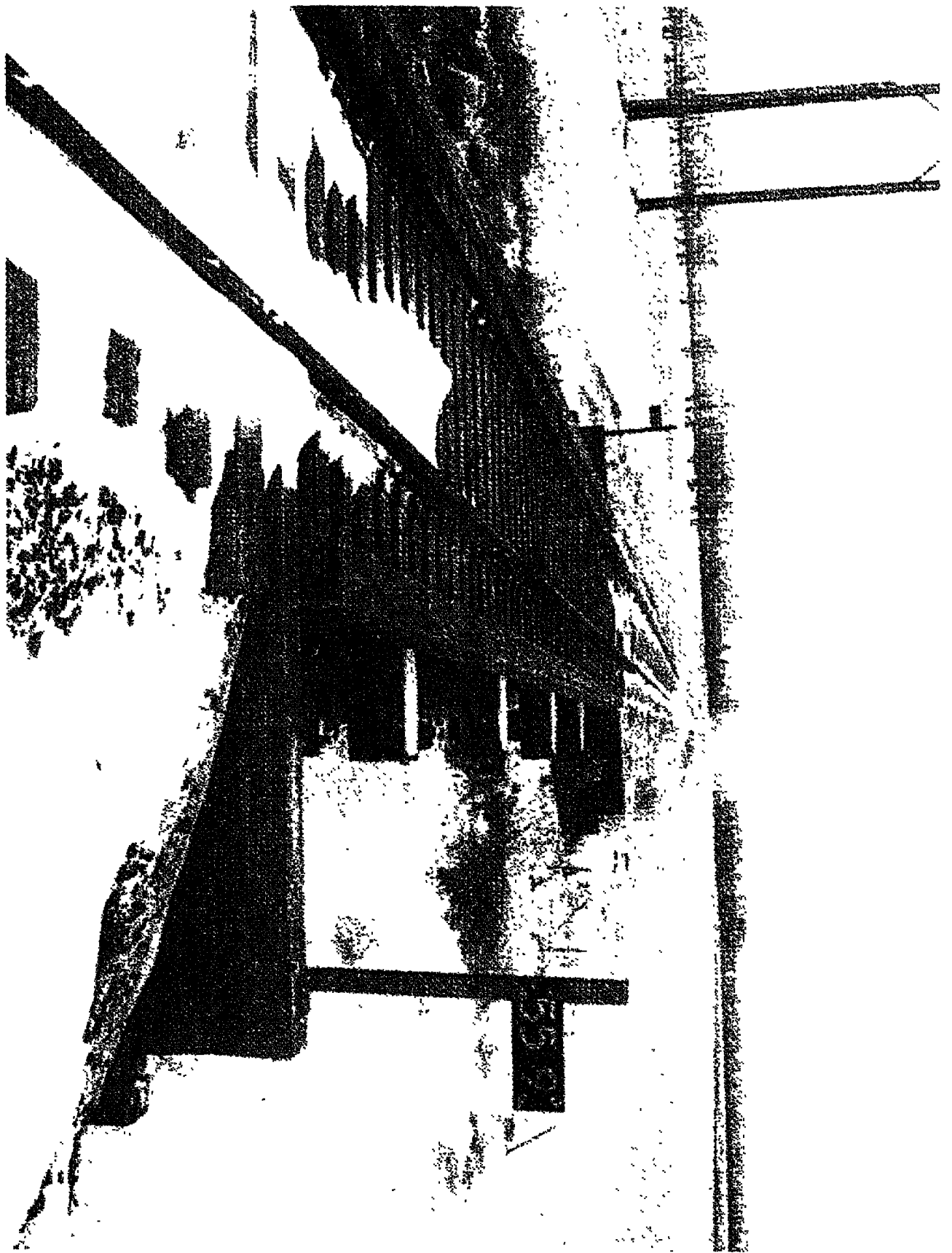


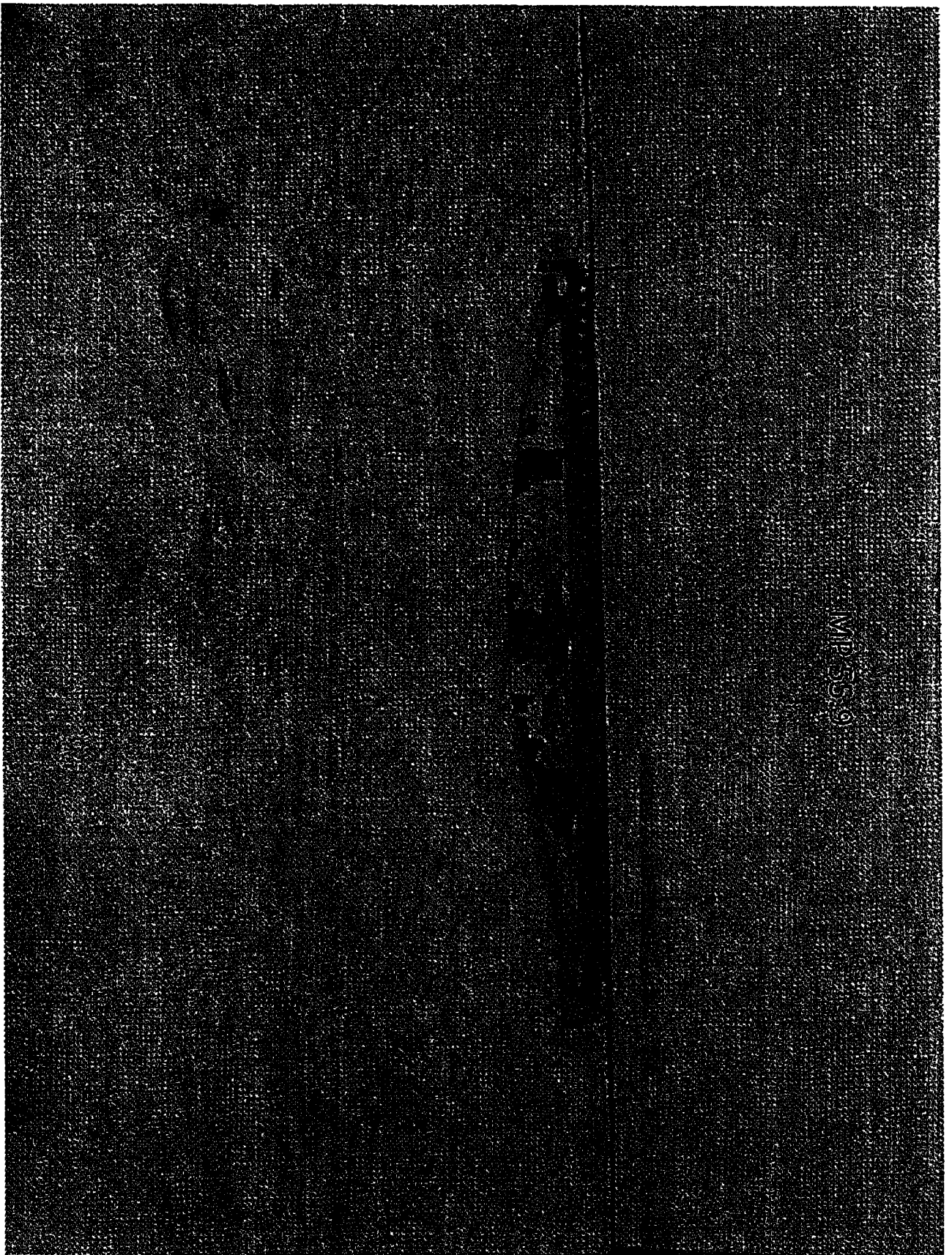




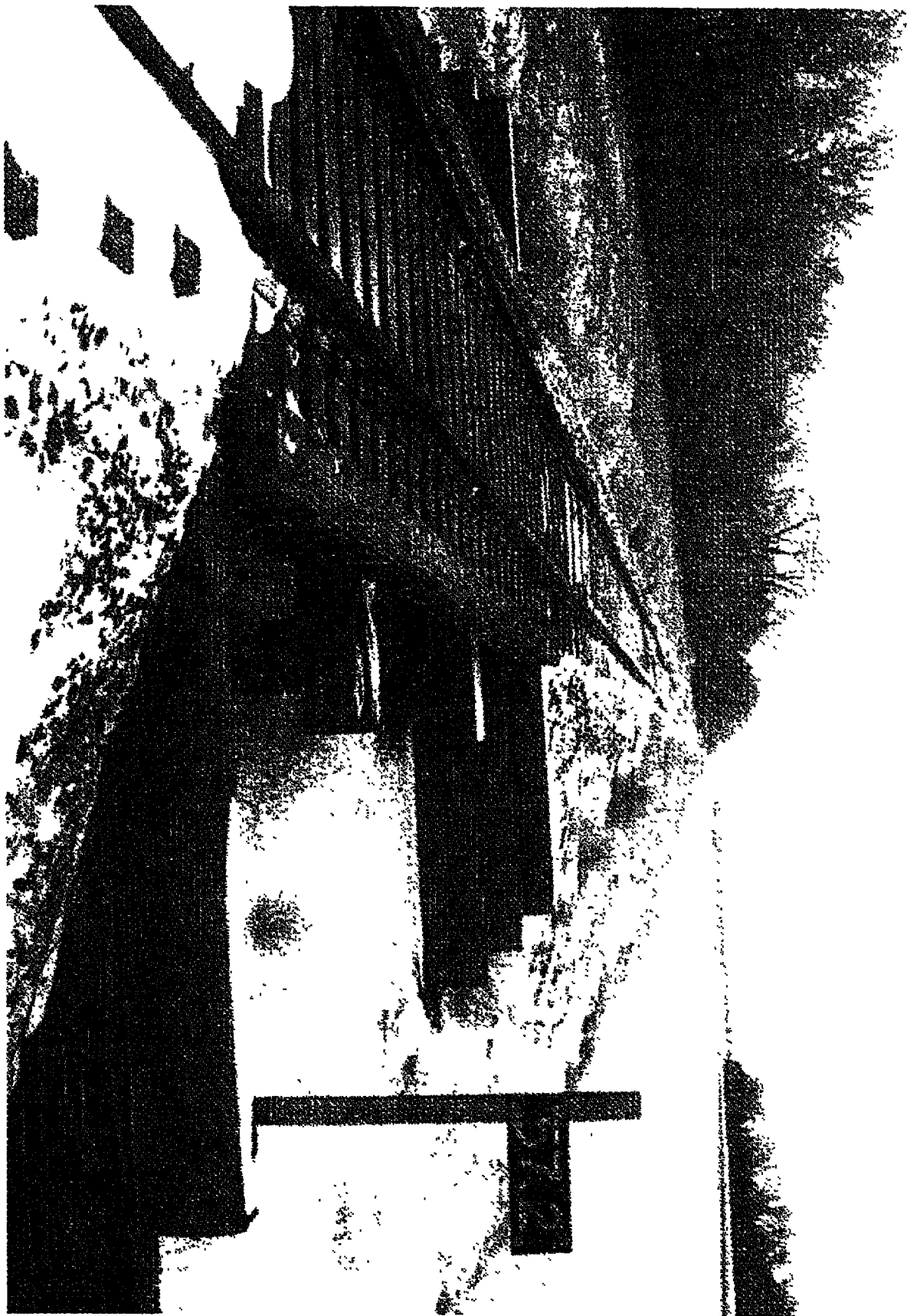


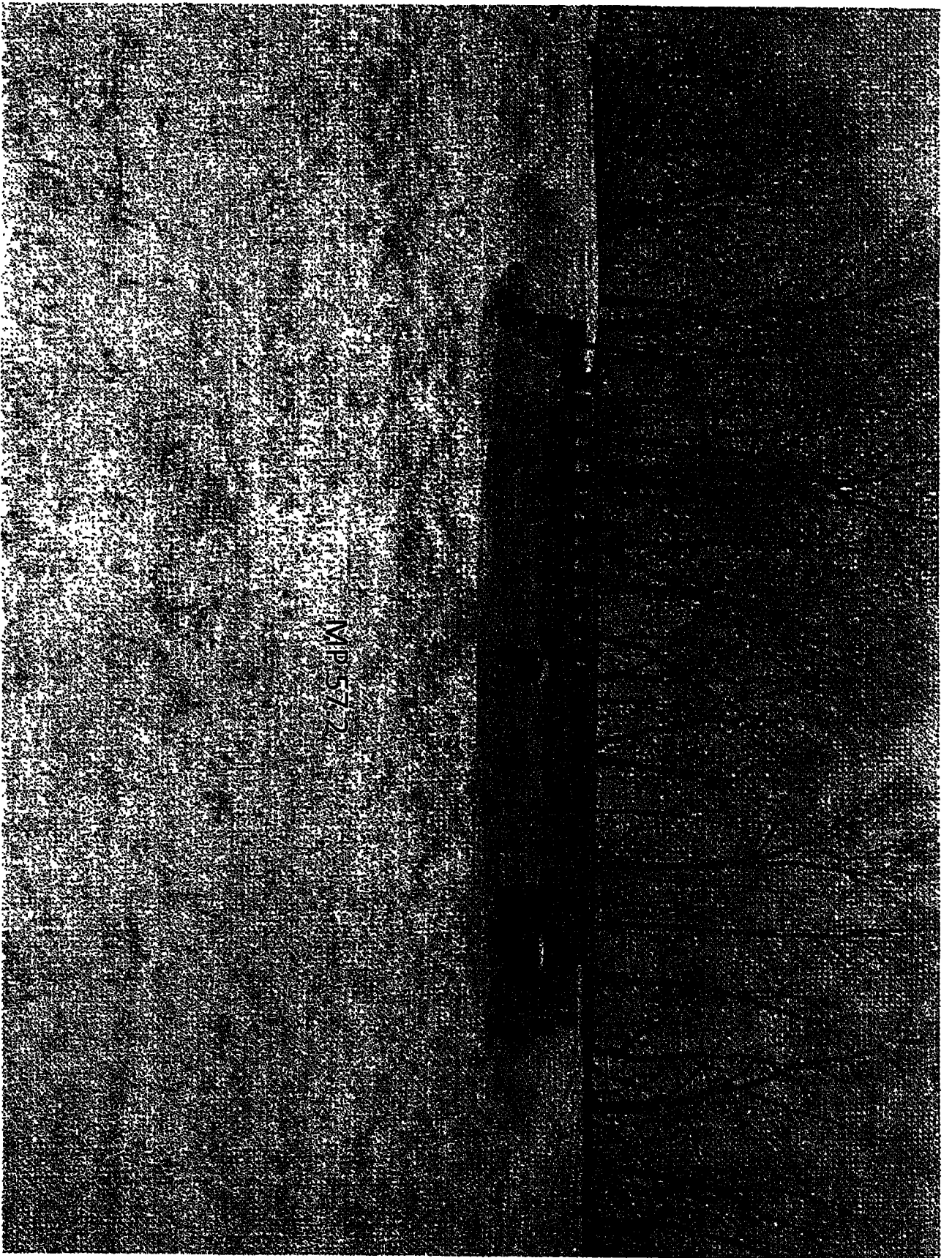




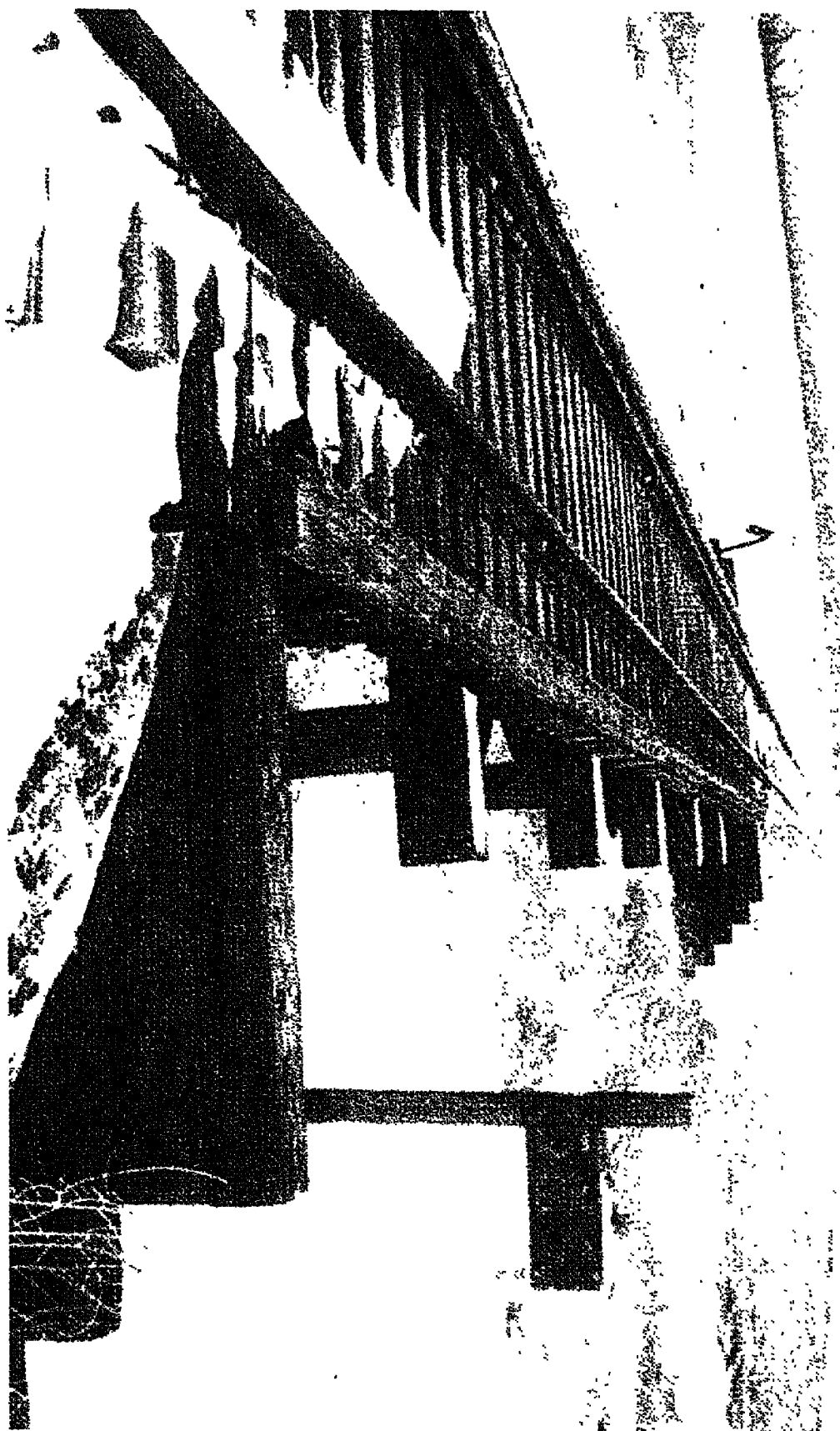








MP.57.2



IMP 58.5





MP 58.9





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HISTORICAL  
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February 1, 2012

Mr. John A. Sims CP  
Paralegal  
Law Department  
NBNSF Railway Company  
2500 Lou Menk Drive - AOB-3  
Fort Worth Texas 76131-2828

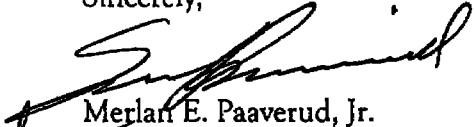
ND SHPO Ref.:12-0587 STB Docket No. AB-6 (Sub No. 481X) BNSF  
Railway Company Abandonment Exemption in Walsh and Pembina  
Counties from milepost 42.08 in Grafton and Milepost 60.20 in Glasston,  
Walsh and Pembina Counties, North Dakota

Dear Mr. Sims,

We reviewed ND SHPO Ref.:12-0587 STB Docket No. AB-6 (Sub No. 481X)  
BNSF Railway Company Abandonment Exemption in Walsh and Pembina  
Counties from milepost 42.08 in Grafton and Milepost 60.20 in Glasston,  
Walsh and Pembina Counties, North Dakota. We concur with your "No  
Historic Properties Affected" determination along this segment.

Thank you for the opportunity to review this project. Please include the ND  
SHPO Reference number listed above in further correspondence for this specific  
project. If you have any questions please contact Susan Quinnell at (701) 328-  
3576, or [squinnell@nd.gov](mailto:squinnell@nd.gov)

Sincerely,

  
Merlan E. Paaverud, Jr.  
State Historic Preservation Officer  
(North Dakota)  
and  
Director, State Historical Society of North Dakota